(99) ? May

In the hurry of the moment I seem to [Charleston] have given T. an empty envelope. I take it you will no doubt shall explain ~~give her this~~ all - I meant

My Baby -

1918

I hope you won't mind 3 times sudden appearance. We are thrown into despair by your letters. As even if you get a maid it would knock 3 times holiday on the head. She could go away immediately after a week new maid came. Besides I admit I'm rather

Angeles really about getting me when they're told what sort of a place this is.

Jamie suggested therefore that she should try & persuade N & L to come at any rate for a short time - even a month would be better than nothing. Surely they could mind Jamie if they knew I should be expected then to stay

As things are I would much rather have them temporarily than no me or even than a stranger at this moment - Can you let them that if they come to me definitely for the summer as a favour to me you will let them come to you for a month or little more Otherwise just to look for a new place if they want to.

see they may think
that if once they get
here they'll be out
of the way of
finding a new place
but if they knew'
they could go back
to you for that purpose
- it might make a
difference - Anyhow
if they'll only give
us a month - it
would give time for
holiday & the rest of
the term. Otherwise

99 ii

I don't know what
to do. The children
are dirty a great deal
of course. work as it
is much Mrs B.
thinks rather waste
of their time, as it
is. Of course
if N & L are obstinate
please get me a
maid if you can
quite have to decide
at once I'm sure
they all get mapped up.

What can Ron have
made you two
change their minds?
Can they have seen
heard anything or read
letters? Please do
all you can to get
them to come.
What a love it all
is. I'm afraid
I'm a great nuisance
Tell Nelly it won't
at all upset us to
have them Temporarily
We shall only look
on it as a holiday
Yours V.B

T. PARKINS 3-2-23

46 Fordm Square

Wed.

My Billy.

I have heard from Carrington who says they would give us £60 in goods or £50 in cash. It's a bore but I think I had better accept & I'll send you yours cheque as soon as I get it. I do hope you'll

settle to come for the week end my monday. Of course Friday to Sunday would be much the nicest. Could you? Anyhow let me know when you like.

Yours V. B.

I see that Pierpoint
is going abroad at
the end of the month
Do write
the doings are here quite
dull

(100)

Charleston 12th June 18.

Wednesday

My Billy. I wrote you
with a telegram but I was
beginning to wonder if you
ever had my letter. Yours,
written on Monday, has only
just come. It puts me
in rather a quandary.
Do you think there really
is some chance that you'll
be able to let me keep
N & L - You see, otherwise,
I shall have them both
now, when I really only
want one, during our
slack time of year, I
shall lose the chance of
getting a permanent maid
in Mr Ford's daughter's /
shall find myself in October
as badly off as ever -

I don't want to bind you. I quite see you must try the other plan & see how it works & if you aren't really comfortable I think it would be crazy to give up good rewards. I only mean that if you really think there is very little chance of your wanting to give them up then it doesn't seem worth my while to have them for the next 3 months. But if you think there is some chance then I'm willing to risk it. As for emergencies I think we could always arrange something - If by any chance it were very difficult to let

Nelly so on account of the baby I could send Jinnie instead could'nt I? With 3 of them here we could certainly arrange something. I am used after all to managing with only one. We have had no baby now for some time. She developed keats in the head, gave them to Jinnie & the children, & was at last found to be in such a state that she had to be dismissed. Anne & Jinny help with the housework! we make our own beds & get along quite well. It will be luxury if we have 3 maids in the house, but we can always go back to 1 in emergency. The only difficulty about

saying nothing to Nelly is that she might object later to Kerry nurse - Do you think she would? Or could I simply say how nice it would be if she'd be my nurse, as if it were only a wild vision. I, see how the land lies, look it? I shant be able either to find out whether she'd also undertake Barbara's baby, an arrangement I'm now rather anxious to negotiate if I knew. But I suppose you'd know by August whether you wanted me to keep them so it could all be settled then. Meanwhile I hope you'll think there's enough chance to make it worth my while having them on July 1st - I enclose a letter for you to give Nelly if you do think so. Please let me know as soon as you can as if not I must try for someone else.

Yours V.B

(101)

14 June 1918

VB Charleston

Friday

My Billy.

I see things are very complicated. However, as I thought I had made clear I am perfectly willing to take some risk - even a good deal. I only didn't want to have the expense if 2 servants & lose the chance if a permanent one if it were certain you two would leave again in October. I never expected they'd certainly stay. In fact I never could have time to consider they themselves were even to know of the project for some time. As it is I have lost the

In box until after tomorrow here I'll keep it & take the wonderful letter with me. Just had from Aunt Nancy & Lisa Sitwell!

14 June 1918

Charleston

Friday

My Billy.

I see things are very complicated. However, as I thought I had made clear I am perfectly willing to take some risk - even a good deal. I only didn't want to have the expense of 2 servants & lose the chance of a permanent one if it were certain your two would leave again in October. I never expected they'd certainly stay. In fact I never could have gone on considering they themselves weren't even to know of the project for some time. As it is I have lost the

(101)

Mr Woolf's letter to Vanessa Bell, 14 June 1918. Leonard Woolf had written a detailed letter from Asheham House to Vanessa Bell's children, Julian and Quentin Bell, and Vanessa's friend Lisa Stettauer.

chance of the Fords' daughter who was snapped up at once even in those few days' delay. I have no one else in prospect & therefore I am more ready even than before to take the risk & have N & L at any rate till October. I hope therefore they'll come. But haven't you put me in rather an awkward position with them by telling them I only wanted them if they stay more than 3 months? It looks as if my letter to Nelly saying I'd be so glad to have them for 3 months were very

insincere & as if I wanted
to get them here on false
pretences. Please make
it plain to them that
I dont consider them
bound in any way &
never did. It also
seems to me rather odd
that they should be ready
to come to me ~~as~~ when
when they think you
do want them & not
ready to come if they
think you dont.
However I must leave
it all to you to arrange.
I see no. can't go into
details without keeping on
the spot - I'm only
anxious that with you
& they should understand

that you are neither of you bound to any permanent arrangement - that I take the risk - which now only amounts to that of having to keep Nelly & pay her wages for 3 months - & that you & they can decide at the end of that time what you'll do. I shall expect them then. on July 1st.

But if by any chance you or they change your minds about this please let me know at once as I still may hear of a permanent servant from Mrs Mason through it's just very likely. Also please let me know if you mind times I may

(101.11)

Please dont think I want to make you commit your selves. Its only that if you really regret the suggestion & definitely dont want to part with them I think it would be better to say so now when I seem to have the chance of the people If you are really doubtful I am quite ready to run the risk for the sake of the possibility of such a very good solution of all my difficulties. But if you are now doubtful & later find you want them back I shant feel badly treated. From your letter I think that (as and

at any rate may
actually have decided he
doesn't want to lose
them - Please tell me
the truth.

(102)

Charleston

1918

June 27

My Billy

I see that it is quite impossible to understand the ins & outs of an affair like this from letters & repeated conversations. I am quite ready to believe that I got quite a wrong idea of all that happened from Trinie. & I daresay its very foolish of me even to try & answer your letter. However I only want to say that I didnt think Leonard had been entirely against the servants coming here, only that he had been more anxious than you to safeguard your interests & that in the end he had said you couldnt be left on July 1st without anyone. Trinie gave me innumerable reports & conversations. & I couldnt attempt to understand them all, but it seemed from what me could understand & from your letters as if that was very likely what had happened & I only implied either you or Leonard had made it clear to me so that we neednt have counted on them coming. I also thought that you had been only too anxious to further my interests & too reluctant to squash my hopes. The only mistake I thought you made was that when Nelly asked you if you'd have them back you might either to have stuck to your original line & said

I must say that I didnt like the way you had me wanted to be regular slaves - I only thought for you to be dropped off to them & myself like a sack of potatoes if it might have been convenient.

(102)

Charleston

1918

June 27

My Billy

I see that it is quite impossible to understand the ins & outs of an affair like this from letters & repeated conversations. I am quite ready to believe that I got quite a wrong idea of all that happened from Trinie. & I daresay its very foolish of me even to try & answer your letter. However I only want to say that. I didnt think Leonard had been entirely against the servants coming here, only that he had been more anxious than you to safeguard your interests & that in the end he had said you couldnt be left on July 1st without anyone. Trinie gave me innumerable reports & conversations. & I couldnt attempt to understand them all, but it seemed from what we could understand & from your letters as if that was very likely what had happened & I only inferred either you or Leonard had made it clear to me so that we need not have counted on them coming. I also thought that you had been only too anxious to further my interests & too reluctant to squash my hopes. The only mistake I thought you made was that when Nelly asked you if you'd have them back you might either to have stuck to your original line & said

I must say that I didnt like the way you had let Nelly wangle this out of you behind my back, but I left him initials for you to be d'accord & to them as it was unnecessary & indeed I suppose it must have been.

of course you would - & have told her the whole truth. I think her suspicions as to whether you really wanted them having been aroused were only increased by being told that I wanted to know if there was a chance of their staying. As for the document, it was apparently simply a mistake either of Tilley's or Times' - at least if was a mistake to say it was Leonard who suggested it if it was really you. They seemed anyhow to have been rather alarmed & to have even thought that I could somehow have the law of them because they'd promised to come here. They seem to have thought you & Leonard wanted rather different things - but I of course believe you & him rather than them via Times - Even if they did think it they were wrong I suppose - Don't let us quarrel about servants anyhow! They're too incomprehensible. If N & L really had a reason against coming (I suppose something to do with Times) why on earth did they ever say they would come or suggest it themselves? It's too odd of them. I'm very sorry if I was indiscreet with Times, but I don't think I said very much to her, except that when I knew you two knew that there was a possibility of their staying

(102 ii) June 1918

here permanently. I said it
wasn't that you had any
fault to find with them
but only that you thought
you might have to do with
a daily. I suppose I
oughtn't to have said so
but I thought she'd think
it so very odd your
letting them. So otherwise I
had no idea then she'd
have a chance of saying
anything to them. As
for the conversation with
Mrs Langston I don't know
she'd seen herself.
But its quite impossible
to get a clear idea with
all the "she said's" &
"I said's" etc. In any
case I hope things haven't
ended in disaster as I feared

fears. You have your two if you want them & I have Emily Paton. She has arrived. Unluckily there was a disaster about to keep me – she had to wait at Berwick. The baby, who is very delicate & only just out of hospital caught cold & is now in bed with bronchitis! Emily herself seems very nice & a good servant though quite ignorant of what to do with babies. Mrs Brereton is practically in charge of it however & in her element. If it recovers I hope it will set strong here &

then I should think Emily will stay: she is evidently glad to be in the country & have the baby with her.

Our only troubles now are that we shall still have to manage somehow while I is on her fortnight's holiday but I suppose we shall. After that I hope to goodness we shall settle down & needn't think of servants again — till I have to get a nurse!

I have had an amazingly unselfish, really ultra-Fisherish letter from Barbara. Of course I'm not to worry about her. it was only too unselfish if one could suggest such a thing — something is sure to turn up

her only cause for worry is
that she fears I am not
quite happy though she does
all she can to make him
him & Nick contented. etc.
Its too incredible -
Ought we to do anything
about Sophy? What will
happen to her? I suppose
George & Gerald will come to
the rescue - I dont see how
we can do anything.
do you.

It seems unnecessary
to write to Lemasd too do
this letter answers him as
much as you can at least
I hope so but one can't
really hope to be clear in
a letter Love VB
Do send me the story
its foolish to have doubts about it now -

T. PARSONS 3.2.73